

Parent Guide for Coaching Teen Drivers



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***This booklet will help you supervise
your teen's practice driving through the
entire Learner Period.***

It follows three basic Practice Principles:

1. Start with the simplest, safest conditions;
2. Progress slowly from easier to more challenging driving conditions;
3. Practice the same driving skills repeatedly and with focus.

My teen has a learner's permit....now what?!

Driving safely is a complex task.

Like any complex task (such as, learning to play the guitar), it takes time and practice to become a safe driver.



In Michigan, teens must complete at least 50 hours of supervised practice driving after they've finished driver education.

Parents supervise most of their teens' practice driving and have an important role in helping their teens learn to drive safely.

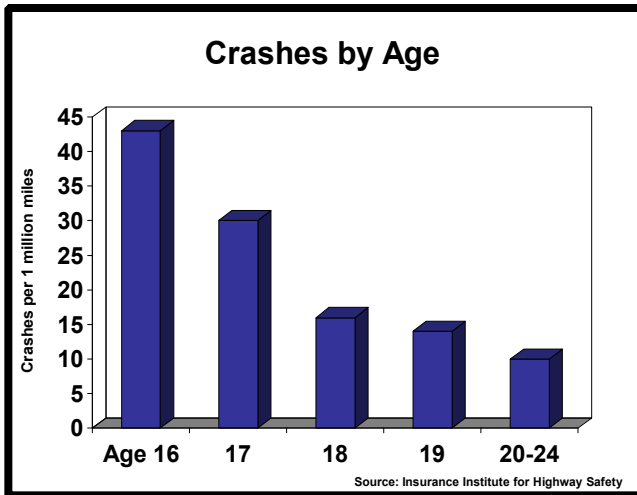
Teen Driving Facts



Driving safely takes years of practice and experience to master.

Injuries from motor vehicle crashes are the **leading cause of death for teens**.

All new teen drivers – even good kids – have a high risk of being in a crash when they start driving alone.



50 hours of supervised practice driving seems like a lot of time to many parents. But, driver ed alone does not prepare teens to be safe drivers. Teens need a lot of practice to drive safely.

The Learner Period is YOUR chance to help your teen learn the skills needed to be a safe driver.

Why Should I Use this Guide?



This Guide Can Help

The information and recommendations in this guide are based on the latest teen driving research and input from parents and leaders in the field of teen driving safety.

Some parents might use the whole guide and some might use parts of it. No matter how it is used, the guide can help parents prepare their teens to be safe drivers.

This guide includes:

- Facts about teen driving
- Suggestions for an overall approach to your teen's Learner Period
- Specific skills, situations, and sample practice drives
- Coaching tips that include communicating with your teen
- Advice for thinking about your teen's progress, skill level, and decisions about what he/she is ready to work on next

Why Should I Use this Guide?



Most parents want to know more about what to do during their teen's supervised driving. Here are some things parents who completed supervised driving wished they had known earlier:

"We jumped to regular drives too soon. I wish we had started in an empty parking lot so I could get a baseline of where his driving was at after driver ed."

<i>What they thought before</i>	<i>What they knew after</i>
My teen took driver ed and got enough practice there	My teen knew <u>how to drive</u> after driver ed, but needed a lot more practice to <u>drive safely</u>
Most parents just sign off on the hours without really doing them	I could see a real difference from more hours of practice – it's worth doing!
50 hours are too many	50 hours were not enough
My teen should keep track of her own driving hours	We kept track together, and planned the next practice
My teen will get enough practice driving to school, work, and the store. We'll just keep repeating those trips during practice	Most of my teen's licensed driving has been to those places, but other trips always pop up so I'm glad we practiced in a lot of different places, too

How to Use this Guide



This guide is not intended to tell you exactly what to do during every practice drive.

Use this guide as a resource of information and tools that you can use in the way that is best for your teen.

The guide includes 3 types of information:

- 1) Topics that you'll need throughout the Learner Period (good communication, coaching tips),
- 2) Tips to help you make your own plan for the Learner Period (starting simple, practicing specific skills, what to work on next),
- 3) Tools to help you create and keep track of practice sessions (skills and sample drives in different settings, a practice log).

"It never worked to make up our route as we drove. It was always better when I planned the drive before we got in the car."

Contents



Topics included in the guide:

	Page
Communicating with your teen	9
Coaching a teen driver	13
Recognizing hazards and reacting	15
Practicing in different conditions	17
Practice Principles	18
How to use the charts	21
Skills in different settings	
Empty parking lots	23
Residential streets	27
Residential / Business streets	31
Downtown – city streets	37
Freeways	41
Rural roads	45
Practice log	49
Sample practice drives	53

Communication and Coaching



First things first: Set clear expectations!



Get on the same page before the first drive!

Discuss:

- Your teen's goals and expectations for practice driving
- Your goals and expectations for practice driving
- Realistic, shared goals and expectations
- What your teen learned in driver ed
- Terms/words your teen used in driver ed, so you can speak the same language
- Emotions may be high – it helps for parents and teens to be aware of this and to try to be calm and kind
- Let your teen know there may be times during drives that you will give directions that he/she must react to quickly without questioning



Tips for good communication during drives:

1. Stay calm and attentive
2. Keep all talking focused on the drive
3. Ask questions to help your teen think about what he/she is doing (Are you checking traffic in both directions?)
4. Be careful with the word “right” – it has two meanings
5. Praise your teen for what he/she does well
6. Focus feedback on only 1 or 2 things at a time
7. Be clear in your feedback
8. Give your teen feedback that focuses on how to do something better (not what they did wrong)
9. Hold detailed feedback until after the drive or when the vehicle is parked safely
10. It is okay to pull over to take a break and provide feedback
11. Talk with your teen before and after each drive



Tips for giving and getting criticism

Giving.....

Some parents said their teens were more open to advice after they had done some driving. Parents suggest giving only a small amount of advice during the first drives and gradually increasing it when teens seem ready to hear more. Adjust your style if your teen isn't responding to it.

"I tried to think about her personality and what she would respond to best."

.....and Getting

Let your teen critique *your driving*. It tips the balance and he/she can learn by teaching.



Communication between supervisors

Parents and teens aren't the only ones who need to communicate during the Learner Period. If more than one adult is supervising the practice driving, don't forget to talk with each other:

1. Decide roles between supervisors to match with your strengths and allow driving time with all (do this early in the Learner Period and every so often later in case changes are needed).
2. Talk often about your teen's progress and things he/she needs to work on during practices.



Plan an effective lesson/driving plan

The timing, length, and content of each practice drive help determine how much your teen learns from each session. Here are some tips for creating effective drives:

1. Think about where you are going before you leave – don't make it up as you go.
2. Keep the first drives short and on familiar roads.
3. Choose routes and conditions (darkness, weather, etc.) that are right for your teen's skill level.

Demonstrate new skills and driving routes

Do a “demo” drive before your teen's first drive at each new skill level and driving route. First, you drive the route. During the drive, talk about what you are doing and what hazards you are looking for in other drivers and on the road.

Some parents are surprised to realize that their own safe driving behaviors are automatic. Talking as you drive can remind you about good tips to share with your teen.



Be the driver you want your teen to be

Your teen will be watching your driving now more than ever. Model a good attitude and good driving behavior every time you drive.



Hazards



Dealing with the unexpected takes practice, too!

Teens don't know where to look for hazards or what to look for. This skill is important for safe driving.

The side box lists examples of exercises you can use in all settings to help your teen practice seeing hazards and responding safely.

Talk to your teen about where you look, including further down the road and about what you look for. Start by pointing out the hazards while you are parked.

Next, have your teen point out hazards while you are driving.

Then, have your teen practice these skills silently while driving.

Park the car and have the teen tell you about the hazards.

Blind spots:

- 1. Point out blind spots.*
- 2. Describe how to check blind spots.*
- 3. Have your teen practice while driving.*

Hidden objects – point out objects that are blocked from sight:

- 1. Trees blocking traffic signs.*
- 2. Vehicles hiding pedestrians.*
- 3. Trees or buildings that block the view of cross traffic.*

Scan your surroundings and point out hazards.

Point out drivers who might do something unexpected and describe how you know what they are about to do.

Point out situations where your vehicle might not be visible to other traffic and what to do about it.



Anticipating and reading others' behavior

Experienced drivers become very good at reading other drivers' intentions.

For example:

1. Drivers who may enter the road when you have the right-of-way.
2. Drivers who may not see you coming.
3. Drivers who move toward the edge of their lane to change lanes without signaling.
4. Drivers who slow to turn without signaling.

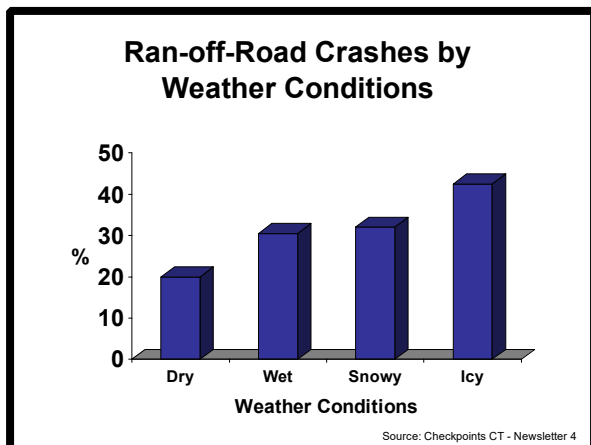
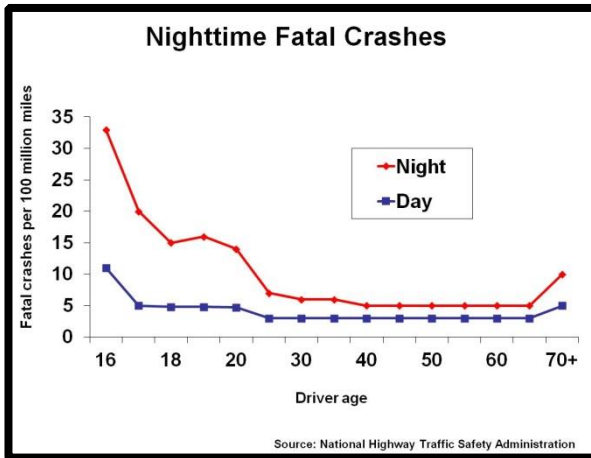
Point these and similar examples out to your teen when you see them, and describe what made you suspect what the other driver might do.

Practice Principles

Practicing in Different Conditions



Teen crash risk is higher at night and in bad weather.



It's important to practice in all conditions. Start off in lowest risk conditions (daylight and dry weather), but as your teen's skills improve over time, add practice drives in the dark and in bad weather.



Are you ready to move to the coach's seat and get your teen behind the wheel?



Before you hand over the keys, think again about the Practice Principles from the first page:

- 1) **Start simple;**
- 2) **Progress slowly;**
- 3) **Practice repeatedly.**

The charts on pages 19 and 20 apply these principles to the driving situations your teen might practice in.

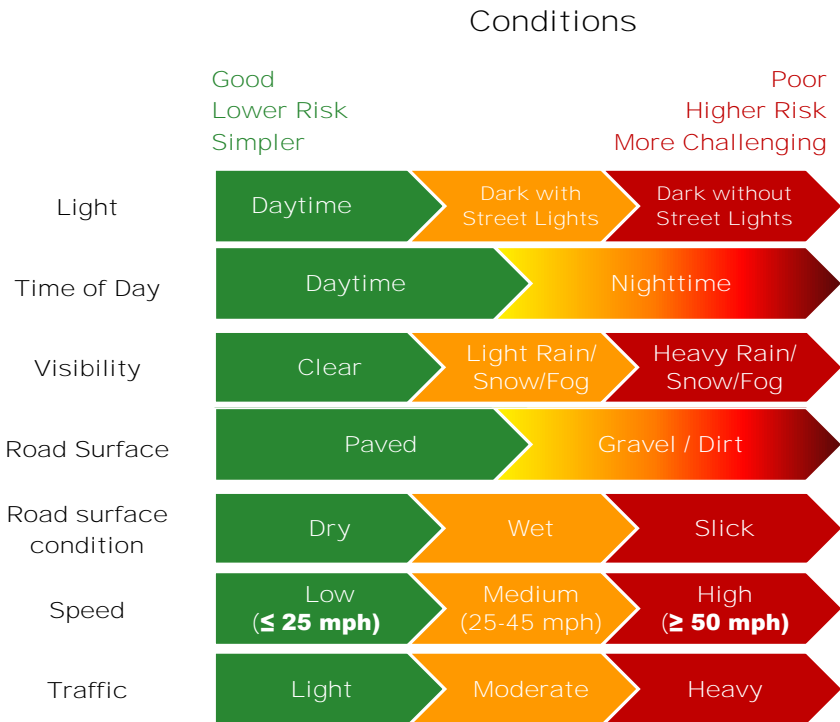
- Page 19 shows various driving conditions progressing from simpler (good/lower risk) to more challenging (poor/higher risk).
- Page 20 combines the conditions into practice drives from lowest risk to highest risk in six settings. Each box contains a practice drive that can be repeated many times, as needed.

Pages 21 and 22 show how you can use these charts to follow the Practice Principles.

Practice Principles



Here are some examples of driving conditions ordered from simpler to more challenging:



Practice Principles



Setting Complexity						
Risk Level	Empty Parking Lot	Residential	Residential / Business	Downtown City	Freeways	Rural Roads
					Night, poor conditions	Night, poor conditions
				Night, poor conditions	Heavier traffic, day, poor conditions	Day, poor conditions
			Night, poor conditions	Day, poor conditions	Light traffic, day, poor conditions	Night, good conditions, gravel road
		Night, poor conditions	Day, poor conditions	Heavier traffic, night, good conditions	Heavier traffic, night, good conditions	Night, good conditions, paved road
		Day, poor conditions	Heavier traffic, night, good conditions	Light traffic, night, good conditions	Light traffic, night, good conditions	Day, good conditions, gravel road
	Poor conditions	Night, good conditions	Light traffic, night, good conditions	Heavier traffic, day, good conditions	Heavier traffic, day, good conditions	Heavier traffic, day, good conditions, paved road
	Night	Heavier traffic, day, good conditions	Heavier traffic, day, good conditions	Light traffic, day, good conditions	Light traffic, day, good conditions	Light traffic, day, good conditions, paved road
	Day	Light traffic, day, good conditions	Light traffic, day, good conditions			





How the charts follow the Practice Principles

Start Simple

The boxes in each column on page 20 go from simpler/lowest risk (bottom) to more challenging/highest risk (top).

Each column shows this progression in different settings. The columns start with a lower risk setting on the left (Empty Parking Lot) and ends with a higher risk setting on the right (Rural Roads).

Progress Slowly

Knowing when your teen is ready for a more challenging practice drive (the next box) can be tough. Here are some things to consider:

1. Your comfort level when your teen is driving – how comfortable would you feel taking your attention away from his/her driving?
2. Your teen's skill and judgment.
3. Your teen's comfort level. Some teens take longer to be ready for higher risk levels. That's okay – there's no need to rush them.

Practice Repeatedly

It helps to go back and practice earlier skills again even after your teen has moved on to driving in more complex settings and higher risk conditions.



How one parent used the charts

Every family is different and each parent will decide the best way to use the charts on pages 19 and 20 for their teen's practice driving. Here is one example.

A practice driving story:

I had supervised two practice drives with my son. The last drive was in our neighborhood on a quiet, dry Sunday morning. He drove smoothly and safely through the route; we didn't see many cars or pedestrians.

I wanted to make the third drive more challenging. The bottom box in the Residential column on page 20 looked similar to our last drive so I put a check in it and looked at the box above it: "Heavier traffic, day, good conditions."

I decided to repeat the last route for the next drive and change the time to a weekday afternoon. This let him stay on a route he was comfortable with, during daylight and in dry weather, and added the challenge of heavier traffic and more hazards to deal with, like bicyclists and pedestrians. I checked the chart on page 19 to make sure the conditions in this drive were still mostly in the green (or good) area.

Skills and Settings



About Empty Parking Lots

Some parents don't think about starting out in an empty parking lot – they may believe that their teens are too experienced to start here because they've already had driver ed and driven on roadways.

While it's true that your teen might have practiced many of these skills in driver ed, now is your chance to see for yourself how your teen is doing and what his/her skill level is.

“I found that an empty parking lot was a great place to start coaching.”





SKILLS TO PRACTICE:

Driving skill	What to work on
1. Know vehicle blind spots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate blind spots while teen sits in driver's seat with engine off
2. Start and stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use accelerator and brake smoothly
3. Steer smoothly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep vehicle centered over an imaginary straight line
4. Steer smoothly, scan, and look ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at intended path of travel and check mirrors and blind spots regularly while keeping vehicle moving straight ahead
5. Steer precisely; and know vehicle dimensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park vehicle in middle of marked space
6. Turn and curve smoothly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ease off accelerator/use brake to reduce speed when entering turn/curve• Use slight acceleration when exiting turn/curve
7. Back up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the above skills while driving in reverse

Sample drills to practice these skills are shown on pages 54 - 56

Empty Parking Lots



Where to begin: Check your teen's driving skills before you head for the road

1. Point to different places in the parking lot and ask your teen to drive to them at a variety of speeds up to 25 mph.
2. Check that your teen starts and stops smoothly.
3. Check that your teen's steering and braking are smooth and straight.
4. Check that your teen is scanning and knows where the vehicle is in relation to objects in the parking lot.
5. Check that your teen drives smoothly through curves and turns.
6. Ask your teen to back up and watch that he/she checks for hazards while driving smoothly to the target.
7. Note any skills where more practice is needed before your teen drives on roads.

*Check your
teen's driving
skills*

Empty Parking Lots



Your notes for Empty Parking Lots:



About Residential Streets

When you decide your teen is ready, leave the parking lot and drive on roadways.

Residential streets are a great setting to help your teen watch for hazards, from other traffic, pedestrians, children playing in streets and yards, sidewalks, driveways, and around parked cars.

“I kept reminding myself to point out when she was doing things right, too. It really helped her attitude and confidence!”





SKILLS TO PRACTICE

Driving skill	What to work on
1. Enter residential streets from a parking lot or driveway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan for traffic • Select safe gap to enter traffic • Turn right and left • Back from driveway into street
2. Maintain lane position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in center of lane – mirrors inside road lines • Share road
3. Maintain safe, consistent speed for conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make uphill/downhill adjustments
4. Check mirrors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check at regular intervals
5. Communicate with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use turn signal
6. Navigate simple intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop completely where required • Scan during approach • Slow gradually • Determine right-of-way • Choose safe gap • Steer smoothly through turn
7. Navigate when stop sign is set back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop twice (sign and intersection)
8. Make turns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn from stop signs, traffic lights, and without stopping

Sample drives for these skills are provided on pages 57 - 59



Residential streets: Where to begin

1. Plan a route on quiet, residential streets that is mostly straight with limited turns or intersections.
2. Ask your teen to exit the driveway or parking lot and enter the street.
3. Have your teen focus on keeping a safe lane position and speed. Ask your teen to stay in the center of the lane. Make sure your teen doesn't drive too close to the curb or the center of the road.
4. Coach your teen to move over safely when passing a pedestrian, biker, or parked car on the road.
5. Watch your teen's speed and make sure he/she holds a safe and steady speed for the street, with only short glances at the speedometer.

Start on quiet, streets, follow a simple route, and focus on safely sharing the road



Your notes for Residential Streets:



About Residential / Business Streets

When your teen is ready to practice driving on more complicated roads (streets with stores and restaurants, roundabouts, multiple lanes of traffic, etc.) it's best to begin where traffic is light, speeds are low, and roads are simplest.

“We spent a lot of time on streets with big intersections and strip malls, because so much of his future driving will be there, and they are intense”





SKILLS TO PRACTICE

Residential / Business Streets can have a lot of traffic and unique design features. There are many skills for teens to practice on these roads. The skills are divided into three tables:

1. Parking
2. Driving in Traffic
3. Navigating Intersections

Parking

Driving Skill	What to work on
1. Drive in a parking lot with other traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scan for vehicles and people• React safely to vehicles and people• Use safe speed
2. Pull into and out of parking lot spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Center the vehicle in the space• Scan for vehicles and people• Give right of way
3. Exit a parking lot onto a business street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turn right onto street• Turn left onto street• Turn right and then safely turn the other direction when able, if left turn not allowed at exit
4. Park on the street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify places to park on the street• Park parallel• Park on a hill (headed downhill, uphill, with and without curbs)



SKILLS (continued):

Driving in Traffic

Driving Skill	What to work on
1. Drive in areas with multiple lanes of traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of other vehicles and their locations • Check blind spots • Change lanes • Maintain safe following distance • Scan for vehicles entering street
2. Maintain appropriate lane position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • React safely to pedestrians, bikes, parked vehicles, etc. • Maintain safe space between vehicles
3. Drive with heavier traffic than previously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep vehicle centered in lane • Maintain a safe following distance • Monitor rear traffic in mirrors
4. Change lanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check traffic all around for a safe gap • Signal lane change • Check blind spots • Hold speed or accelerate to safely and smoothly change lanes • Adjust speed to regain safe space • Discuss how to decide when safe and legal to change lanes and/or pass



SKILLS (continued):

Navigating Intersections

Driving skill	What to work on
1. Navigate complex intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yield to traffic and pedestrians • Obey traffic lights • Make a right turn on red if allowed • Use turn lanes • Turn left without a light
2. Turn left at protected intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify which light is for the turn lane • Respond safely and legally to green arrows/lights, amber arrows/lights, and flashing red arrows/lights • Check traffic from all directions for cars running the light • Check for pedestrians/bikers
3. Turn left through a median lane ("Michigan lefts")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate turn lane • Enter turn lane • Check for traffic light/sign • Check for gap and merge into traffic
4. Drive roundabouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a safe gap to enter • Yield appropriately, do not stop if not needed • Maintain a constant safe speed • Select the appropriate lane • Signal exit from roundabout • Practice right, straight, and left exits

**Sample drives for these skills are shown on
pages 60 - 64**



Residential / Business Streets: Where to begin

1. Avoid complex, multi-lane and higher speed roads.
2. Plan drives for low traffic times.
3. Include parking lots that will have traffic in them.
4. Have your teen make several rounds of the parking lot, responding safely to traffic and pedestrians.
5. Practice pulling into and backing out of parking spots.
6. Exit the parking lot using a right turn into traffic.
7. Include a variety of simple controlled intersections.
8. Practice right and left turns at intersections.

Start by practicing in a parking lot with traffic in it, such as a grocery store or shopping center





Your notes for Residential / Business Streets:



About Downtown - City Streets

A big part of learning to drive in city traffic is working on visual skills, anticipating and recognizing hazards on busy city streets, and reacting to them safely.

“Downtown streets can be so confusing and something is always coming at you! I did extra demo drives here.”





SKILLS TO PRACTICE

Driving skills	What to work on
1. Deal with hazards from on-street parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cars entering or exiting parking spaces • Doors opening
2. Deal with delivery trucks and buses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People walking to and from vehicles • Traffic stopping suddenly
3. Deal with alleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cars or bikes coming out of alleys
4. Deal with pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking to and from buildings • Crossing street in crosswalks • Crossing street illegally
5. Navigate city intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings and traffic limiting what can be seen • Odd street angles at some intersections limiting what can be seen
6. Deal with intense drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive or impatient drivers competing for lane and/or parking
7. Deal with heavy, stop-and-go traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lane position • Following distance • Braking
8. Navigate city streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-way streets • Lanes that abruptly end or change to turn only

Sample drives for these skills are shown on pages 65 - 67



Downtown - City Streets: Where to begin

1. Plan a route that includes crosswalks, stop signs, traffic lights, and one-way streets.
2. Give your teen turn-by-turn directions during the drive, like “turn right at the next stop sign”.
3. Ask your teen to think about hazards and how he/she will handle them.
4. After the drive, discuss hazards you and your teen saw and ask him/her to talk about how to handle them.

Parent-planned and guided route in light traffic

When your teen is ready, try giving him/her a destination and ask him/her to navigate to it without directions from you.

Downtown – City Streets



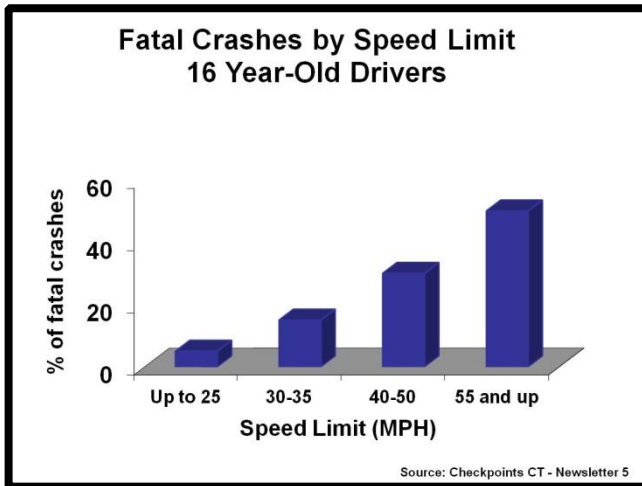
Your notes for Downtown - City Streets:



About Freeways

On expressways and freeways your teen needs practice interacting with other vehicles, maintaining a safe following distance, recognizing hazards, and making decisions while driving at higher speeds.

“He seemed so shocked by how fast he had to react and make decisions on the freeway.”



Merging onto and exiting from the freeway and driving with two or more lanes of fast traffic are new skills your teen will need to master.



SKILLS TO PRACTICE

Driving skills	What to work on
1. Enter a freeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match speed to traffic • Find a gap in traffic • Merge into traffic
2. Drive with freeway traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a safe speed • Change lanes • Follow at a safe distance • Select appropriate travel lanes • Pass slower traffic • Be passed by faster traffic
3. Scan traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search far ahead • Use mirrors to check traffic • Monitor blind spots • Watch for brake lights ahead • Anticipate fast traffic from behind • Watch for slow-moving or stopped vehicles
4. Accommodate entering traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for merging traffic • Move or change speed for merging traffic
5. Exit a freeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use signal correctly • Maintain speed until in exit lane • Slow safely for ramp
6. Use route markers and road signs to navigate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for “exit only” lanes • Check and understand signs • Select the correct lane • Understand exit numbering

**Sample drives for these skills are shown on
pages 68 - 71**



Freeways: Where to begin

1. Choose times and days when traffic is light, such as weekend mornings to begin.
2. Complete initial practice drives on simpler freeways, such as those with fewer entrances and exits and only two lanes.
3. Focus on two or three skills per drive and practice them specifically.

*Start in light
traffic on
simpler
freeways*

When your teen is ready:

- Add busy, urban freeways with 3 or more lanes in both directions and interchanges with other freeways.
- Practice using cruise control and talk about when it is okay to use it and when it is not safe.
- Add teen-planned and teen-navigated routes in light traffic.

Freeways



Your notes for Freeways:



About Rural Roads

Teen drivers are more likely to be involved in fatal crashes in rural areas than in urban areas. Rural roads are not divided, have higher speeds, and may have poorer lighting, more curves, more hills, and unpaved surfaces than other roads. These conditions, and others, increase the crash risk for teen drivers, so it's important for teens that will be driving on rural roads to get as much practice as possible handling these risks.

"I always thought country roads were safer. The high crash risk here really surprised me."





SKILLS TO PRACTICE

Driving skills	What to work on
1. Drive with rural traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for slow moving vehicles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ farm and oversize vehicles, ATVs, mail carriers, horses and buggies • Be sure other vehicles can see and hear you • Travel at a safe speed • Maintain lane position • Follow vehicles at a safe distance
2. Scan for hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching far ahead • Scan the roadside
3. Anticipate hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potholes, water, or obstacles in the road • Soft or no shoulder • Blind spots from hills and curves • Poor road surface • Tall crops and weeds blocking view • Blind driveways • Fewer road signs • Uncontrolled intersections • Animals in or entering road
4. Drive on different road types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravel or dirt • Narrow roads • Pave, but no line markings • Crowned/higher in middle of road
5. Pass a slow vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine when it is legal to pass • Determine when it is safe to pass • Safely pass a slow vehicle

A sample drive for Rural Roads is shown on page 72



Rural roads: Where to begin

1. Design a route on a paved road that will allow your teen to encounter some of the things in the table on page 46.
2. Ask your teen to describe hazards that might be encountered and how he/she will handle them.
3. Point out any hazards your teen misses and ask him/her to describe how to handle them.

Start on paved roads in light traffic and good weather.

Practice identifying and handling rural road hazards.

When your teen is ready, add teen-planned and teen-navigated routes on rural roads.



Your notes for Rural Roads:

Practice Log

Practice Driving Log



Date	Total time of drive	Total hours thru today	Notes (setting, conditions, road type, things teen did well, things that need more work, etc.)

Practice Driving Log



Date	Total time of drive	Total hours thru today	Notes (setting, conditions, road type, things teen did well, things that need more work, etc.)

Practice Driving Log



Date	Total time of drive	Total hours thru today	Notes (setting, conditions, road type, things teen did well, things that need more work, etc.)

Practice Driving Log



Date	Total time of drive	Total hours thru today	Notes (setting, conditions, road type, things teen did well, things that need more work, etc.)

Sample Drives



SAMPLE PRACTICE DRIVES



Sample 1 for Empty Parking Lots

1. Point to different places in the parking lot and ask your teen to drive to them. Focus on smooth starts and stops.
2. Choose some marked parking spaces and ask your teen to park in them, keeping the vehicle centered within the space's lines.
3. Ask your teen to drive around the perimeter of the parking lot. Focus on continuous and smooth steering movements and holding a safe vehicle position in the "lane".
4. Choose a direction for your teen to travel in and ask him/her to back out of a parking space and drive in that direction. Focus on smooth steering wheel movements.

*Starting and
stopping*

*Smooth
steering*



Sample 2 for Empty Parking Lots

1. As your teen drives in the parking lot, be sure that he/she is checking the vehicle's mirrors and blind spots, and steering the vehicle in a smooth path toward the intended target at the same time.

Scanning and knowing where the vehicle is in relation to objects in the parking lot

2. Ask your teen to steer the vehicle alongside a target point (like a pavement line, curb, object, etc.) and stop.

Smooth curves and turns

3. Practice stopping at several different targets to the left, right, front, and rear of the vehicle.
4. Have your teen practice easing off the accelerator / using the brake to reduce speed before entering a curve. Use slight acceleration when moving the vehicle out of the curve.
5. Ask your teen to practice several right and left turns from a stop and while moving.



Sample 3 for Empty Parking Lots

1. Focus on seeing, steering, and speed control during all of the drills below. Drive in reverse for all of the drills.
2. Ask your teen to drive the vehicle to various targets in reverse (requiring only straight backing) at minimal speed.
3. Stop the car parallel to a straight line on the pavement.
4. Park the vehicle in the middle of a marked parking space.
5. Stop the vehicle so that the driver-side rear tire straddles a line on the pavement.
6. When you decide your teen is ready, practice the above skills by turning into the maneuver from a right or left turn.
7. Ask your teen to practice the maneuvers above using only the mirrors to guide the vehicle to a target.

Backing up



Sample 1 for Residential Streets

1. Think about routes that allow your teen to keep working on skills previously practiced.
2. Have your teen practice scanning and communicating with others (signaling).
3. Include several intersections with stop signs or traffic lights where your teen can go straight or turn right.
4. Remind your teen to be aware of others on the road (vehicles, pedestrians, bikes, etc.) and to use turn signals to communicate all intended moves.

*Scanning,
communicating
with others on
the road, and
right turns*





Sample 2 for Residential Streets

1. Include several intersections in your route that require your teen to make a left turn (at stop signs or traffic lights).

*Add left turns
at controlled
intersections*

2. Keep practicing these skills on quiet residential streets until you feel comfortable while your teen is driving.





Sample 3 for Residential Streets

1. During the drive, ask your teen to think about the hazards he/she sees and how he/she will handle them.

2. **Time to talk***: Ask your teen to describe the hazards he/she saw while driving and how to handle them safely.

Add a curbside talk with your teen about what he/she did to drive safely

3. **Time to talk***: Ask your teen to describe how he/she approached the intersections in the drive (things like who had the right of way, picking the legal lane to turn from and into, etc.).

*It's important to take **time to talk** with your teen about his/her progress after a practice drive or while the vehicle is stopped during a drive.

Sample Drives: Residential / Business



Sample 1 for Residential / Business Streets

1. Plan a route that will allow your teen to continue practicing the skills from the previous drives.
2. Include several locations during the drive where your teen can practice parking on the street.
3. Early in the drive, point out a location on the street and ask your teen to parallel park in that target space.
4. Near the end of the drive, ask your teen to choose a safe and legal place to park on the street and to park in that target space.
5. **Time to talk:** ask your teen to describe the hazards he/she saw while driving and how to react to them safely.

*Add street
parking and
continue
recognizing
hazards*



Sample 2 for Residential / Business Streets

1. Include a mix of single and multiple lanes, controlled and uncontrolled right turns, but avoid left turns.
2. Start the drive at a time when traffic will be light to moderate.
3. During the drive check your teen's speed.
4. During the drive check the vehicle's position in the lane and in relation to other vehicles.
5. During the drive check the distance your teen is leaving between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead (following distance).
6. **Time to talk:** advise your teen that changing lanes should not be done too often or unnecessarily. Ask your teen why a driver might need to change lanes (e.g., to avoid an obstacle, make a turn, pass a stopped vehicle, etc.).

*In light traffic,
work on
driving at safe
speeds for
conditions,
lane position
(including
changing
lanes), and
following
distance*

Remember to mention things he/she does well!

Sample Drives: Residential / Business



Sample 3 for Residential / Business Streets

1. Include several intersections where your teen can practice left turns that are protected from oncoming traffic by giving the left turn lane its own traffic light or arrow.

*Add protected
left turns and
discuss passing*

2. **Time to talk:** discuss how to decide when it is safe to pass another vehicle, when it is legal to pass, and how to safely complete a pass.



Sample Drives: Residential / Business



Sample 4 for Residential / Business Streets

1. Start the drive at a time of day with medium to medium-heavy traffic.
2. If possible in your area, include intersections where “Michigan Left” turns are required (where vehicles are not allowed to turn left at the intersection and instead must turn right or go straight at the intersection and then make a U-turn at a location marked by a sign).
3. Guide your teen through the first “Michigan Left” turn and point out the road signs that inform drivers about the turn.
4. When approaching “Michigan Left” turns later, only instruct your teen to go left at next intersection so he/she practices navigating the intersection without guidance.

*Add
“Michigan
Left” turns and
increase traffic
volume to
moderate /
moderate-
heavy*



Sample Drives: Residential / Business



Sample 5 for Residential / Business Streets

1. Include several uncontrolled intersections (unmarked, no traffic lights or signs) and start the drive at a time that will let your teen practice uncontrolled intersections in heavier traffic than he/she has practiced yet.
2. If a roundabout is available in your area, include it in the route and allow your teen to practice driving through it several times, entering and exiting at all points.

*Add
roundabouts
and work on
uncontrolled
intersections in
heavier traffic*



Sample Drives: Downtown - City



Sample 1 for Downtown - City Streets

1. Plan a route that allows your teen to keep practicing city driving skills.
2. Give your teen turn-by-turn directions during the drive.
3. Have your teen practice parking downtown - in an angled space on a street, in a parking lot that is not empty, in a parking structure / garage if available, and parallel on the street.
4. **Time to talk:** ask your teen to describe hazards he/she saw during the drive and discuss how to handle them safely.

*Add city
parking
practice*



Sample Drives: Downtown - City



Sample 2 for Downtown - City Streets

1. Guide your teen using only street names and turn directions, like “turn right on Main Street.” This gives your teen practice searching for the correct street, checking the intersection type and making the turn safely.

Parent-planned and teen-guided route in light traffic

2. **Time to talk:** continue asking your teen to describe hazards he/she saw during the drive and how he/she will handle them safely.

Sample Drives: Downtown - City



Sample 3 for Downtown - City Streets

1. Give your teen a destination and ask him/her to plan a route to get there, and to drive there without navigational guidance from you.
2. Talk about what to do if he / she were lost (find a safe place to stop, etc.)
3. **Time to talk:** ask your teen to keep talking about hazards he/she saw during the drive and how to handle them safely.

*Teen-planned
and teen-
guided route in
light traffic*

Keep practicing downtown until you feel comfortable while your teen is driving!



Sample Drives: Freeways



Sample 1 for Freeways

1. Begin on freeways in light traffic and avoid interchanges with other freeways.
2. Plan a route that allows your teen to practice the skills in the table on page 42 in light traffic.
3. When your teen is ready, drive the same route in heavier traffic.

*Freeways in
light traffic
and no
interchanges
with other
freeways*

Sample Drives: Freeways



Sample 2 for Freeways

1. Before you start the drive, ask your teen to discuss hazards he/she might see and how to handle them safely.
2. If your teen plans to use cruise control when licensed, have him/her practice using cruise control. Discuss situations where it is okay to use cruise control and situations where it should not be used.
3. **Time to talk:** discuss any hazards your teen saw and different ways to handle them safely.

*Add hazard
detection and
discuss cruise
control*

Sample Drives: Freeways



Sample 3 for Freeways

1. When you decide your teen is ready, add busier freeways.
2. Before you start the drive, give your teen tips for watching and reacting to traffic.
3. **Time to talk:** discuss any hazards your teen saw and ask him/her to describe how to handle them safely.

*Add busier
freeways*

**This is a good time to start with a parent demo –
show your son/daughter how you handle busier
freeway traffic!**

Sample Drives: Freeways



Sample 4 for Freeways

1. Include at least one freeway interchange in your route.
2. At first, guide your teen through the interchange with move-by-move instructions.
3. When you decide your teen is ready, include interchanges in the route and let your teen guide the vehicle through them with little or no instruction from you.
4. Point out things your teen did well and things that can be improved. Give specific examples.

*Add
interchanges
with other
freeways*

Sample Drives: Rural Roads



Sample for Rural Roads

1. Design routes that allow your teen to experience a variety of the rural road characteristics listed in the table on page 46.
2. When your teen is comfortable driving on paved roads, begin driving on gravel and dirt roads.
3. When your teen is ready, practice driving on rural roads at night and in bad weather.
4. As your teen gains experience, stop giving him/her turn-by-turn directions and ask him/her to navigate.
5. **Time to talk:** ask your teen to describe hazards he/she saw during the drive and discuss how to handle them safely.

Use the approaches shown on pages 18-22 to gradually increase the risk level of your teen's practices on rural roads

Keep practicing until you feel comfortable while your teen is driving!